

LIBRARY ALL FOR CHILDREN

Mother Often Hasn't Time
To Tell Them Stories
Now, So This Helps
Her.

Time was when the mother at the end of the day gathered her children about her knee and saw the curly heads first rise and then droop at the tales of Cinderella, Bluebeard and Cock Robin.

Modern life, with its many exactions, has encroached on the Children's Hour, and the busy mother is seeking in bypaths and zigzag ways to find some method by which the growing mind in her charge shall receive that particular form of mental food.

For to grow up without the memories of legends, fairy tales and folklore is to grow up with half the happiness of childhood wiped out.

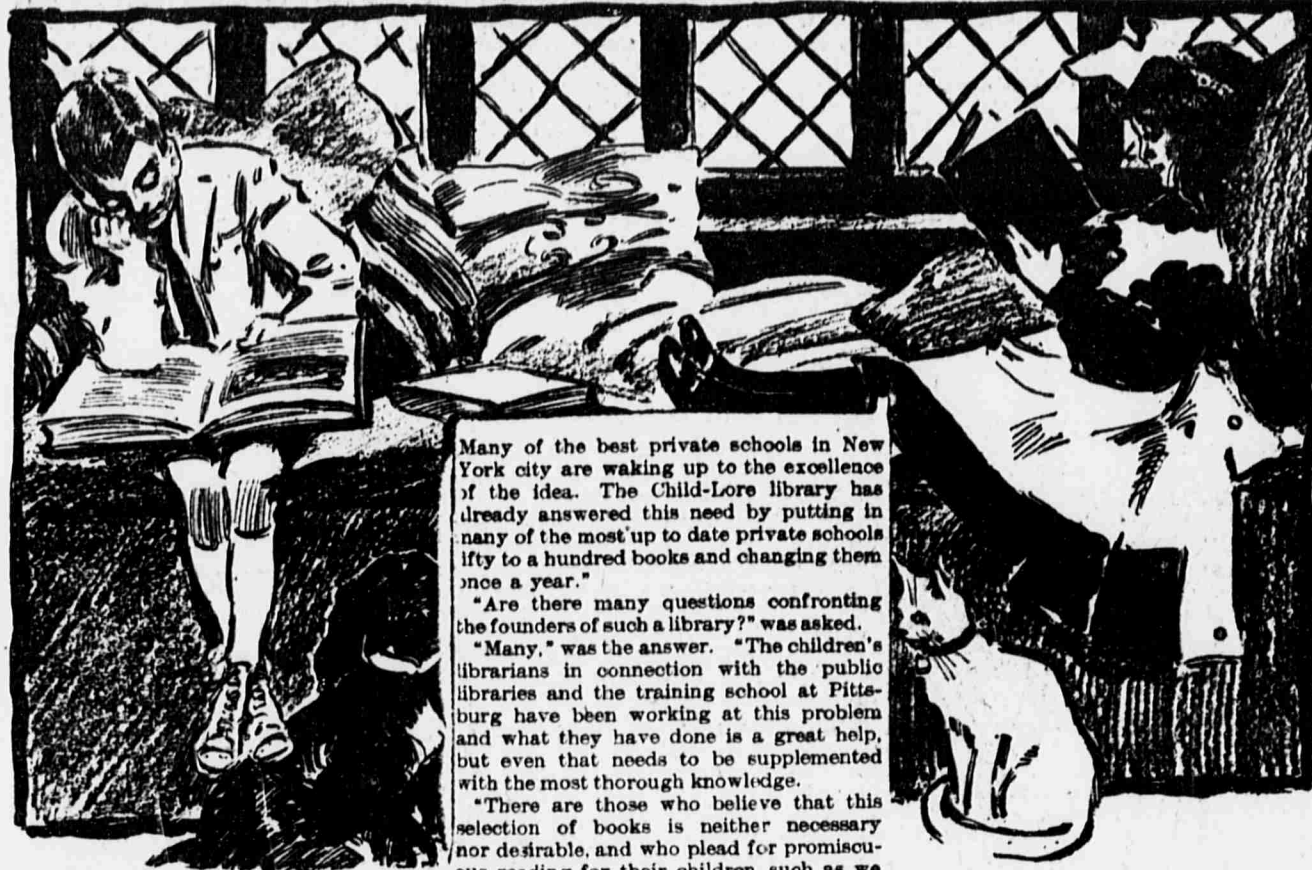
To supply this need, the Child Lore Library has opened its doors at 54 East Fifty-ninth street. Its purpose is to supplement that need of the busy mother who cries out that she has not the time or the experience necessary to sift out from the mass of literature offered her in book store and

those that are really good. These, together with the best new ones, it places on its shelves for sale as well as circulation.

The purpose and methods of the library are approved by John Burroughs, Mary Mapes Dodge, Laura E. Richards, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Hamilton Mabie, Dr. F. N. McClure and others interested in children's books. The librarian, Miss Josephine Emerson, has had many years experience in teaching children, and in a talk with the Sun reporter she eagerly welcomed the idea of devoting her strength now to entertaining and subconscious instruction.

Mr. Burroughs acts as the court of last appeal in regard to the stories of animals which are flooding the market with meretricious and fictional appeals to the imagination.

"It is a strange thing," said the librarian, "that the children do not form any lasting



Many of the best private schools in New York city are waking up to the excellence of the idea. The Child Lore library has already answered this need by putting in many of the most up to date private schools fifty to a hundred books and changing them once a year.

"Are there many questions confronting the founders of such a library?" was asked. "Many," was the answer. "The children's librarians in connection with the public libraries and the training school at Pittsburgh have been working at this problem and what they have done is a great help, but even that needs to be supplemented with the most thorough knowledge."

"There are those who believe that this selection of books is neither necessary nor desirable, and who plead for promiscuous reading for their children, such as we ourselves remember to have had in childhood. They lose sight of two facts."

"First, those old libraries were very different in character from those we find in the average home to-day. They were mostly of standard literature with a few books for children, which were written before the fads in children's literature had sprung into existence; they were like wholesome bread and butter when compared with the library bonbons flooding the child's world to-day."

"Second, how many we know how many of the children of that time were fairly let down from the golden age of childhood to the age of manhood or womanhood by an early reading of the wrong book?"

A mother who is looking at the new Christmas books turns at the last remark and says:

"I wonder if many mothers remember as well as I their premature incursion into the realm of grown up love making. After reading that for weeks my mind did not get back to the normal and I wanted something thrilling. Mere children's stories no longer appealed."

"Perhaps you will not be surprised when I tell you that its name was 'The Pale Lily' or, 'The Bride's Frightful Honeycomb.' I remember the story to-day—the adventures of the bride torn from her husband's side by savages and her exciting rescue. I can look back now and see the harm it wrought."

whatever they may be, welcomes the thought of having a place where she may turn to obtain information of this character. In the book store she sees tables and shelves filled to overflowing with a confusion of juvenile literature. She asks the clerk:

"What book have you that would be interesting and good for a ten-year-old child?"

"This," he answers, handing one, 'sells very well and has very attractive pictures.'

"But what is the subject matter of the book?" is asked.

"Well, I can't tell as to that," he says, "but I suppose it must be good, because it sells."

"The book is bought and adds one more to the number of those purchased because they sell. In nine cases out of ten a book which sells simply because it has an attractive cover and illustrations is utterly useless as regards its contents, while the story itself is often absolutely harmful."

"It is not always possible or convenient for children to have a library at home, especially one large enough to satisfy the needs of the growing mind, and in apartment life it may be absolutely impossible, so the circulating feature is made an important part of the Child Lore Library. The child who is a member may come and

my recent patrons, said, 'Oh, have you read "The Gadfly"?'

"I said 'Yes, I read it when it came out two or three years ago.'"

"And isn't it a fine story?" she continued.

"I looked at her gravely. She was scarcely twelve."

"It certainly is a fine story," I admitted, "but not at all suitable for a little girl like you."

"She was amazed. 'Why, I enjoyed it very much,' she said. 'I did not ask her why. I could see that her mind, too early matured, had grasped a part, but not the better part of the story—just its worst features, its sensational, thrilling adventures, and her little imagination would need to take many backward steps.'"

"But don't you think," was asked, "that as Emerson says of society which 'protects itself,' so a child's mind is barred by its own innocence from much that might hurt it?"

"My answer to that," said the librarian, "is simply if the child does not understand why should its precious time be wasted? Every moment counts, every bad book must be counteracted and every worthless book absorbs the hour that might be used in inculcating something of interest and worth. And who can tell the wonders of the child's mind, its retention of facts it does not understand at the moment until later knowledge comes to add its stock and to drag these long hidden suggestions from their hiding places? Then a child's curiosity is great; it is prompted by those little tendrils of thought to seek more and further, the seed soon sown."

"There are only three children's magazines on the market that are any good, and out of the mass of books sent me from the publishers you would be surprised at the number I have to return. And yet I am told that the child's book pays both the author and the publisher better than any other kind; it would seem that this should be an incentive to achieve something finer in this direction."

"Children do not want introspective books; they do not want to know the effects of certain actions, except as the story un-

pieces of literature, translations and interpretations of old myths and legends. The story is often so simplified and weakened that it loses its value, that is, loses all the literary merit and beauty of the original. In the telling of these old stories there is not the same danger as in the written version, because there is less permanent effect and the spirit of the story is expressed through the personality of the story teller. Many of these tales were first sung by bards and minstrels or told about the fire-side for generations before they were written."

"In many children's stories there is a tendency toward the weak and pretty to the exclusion of the simple and strong. In one of Denlow's recent books he has made the giant in 'Jack, the Giant Killer,' a good giant, thus depriving the story of its strength."

"This Christmas many of the old time stories, dear to us when children, have

stories. There is not the faintest attempt at instruction.

"I have taught children all my life," says the librarian, "hammered the facts into their heads, punished them when facts failed to lodge. Now I enjoy letting them teach themselves. All I do is to guide, and I do that as much as possible unconsciously to them and to myself. I never interrupt a child who tells a story. If one of the other children corrects her, all right; if not, unless it is a gross error, the story runs along. I find out from these stories what the children like, and follow the growth of their minds from week to week."

In the room set apart for the story telling, little chairs, looking like those used in "Candida," are ready for the occupants. One by one the youngsters struggle in, some in the care of mothers, some with maids, some with a companion who has been brought there to hear the fairy tales. It is a section of town nearest the fashionable homes, and many of the little ones speak French and German so fluently that a foreign department is a feature of the library shelves.

The children sit in little rows and wait anxiously the opening word. A little girl with golden hair, blue eyes and rosy cheeks, who looks like a miniature Gretchen, is chosen to begin. It is the Christmas season and all stories have a holly and a mistletoe atmosphere about them.

"Once upon a time," she begins, and a sigh of content is heard.

"There was a church so tall and so big that its head was in the clouds and no one had ever seen it, but the Grandpapas said that oh, a long, long time ago, there had



"HAVE YOU READ 'THE GAD FLY'?"

been coming out in fanciful editions; one little girl the other day spoke of the 'addition' to a book, and spoke truer than she knew. The attire is so fanciful that we fall to recognize our old friends.

"And, by the way," interpolated the librarian, taking down a beautiful edition of Ouida's Bimbi stories, "is it not strange

been heard beautiful chimes on Christmas eve, but now for many years there had not been one because nobody had brought any gifts which the Christ Child liked."

"So," the librarian gives her courage, for little story-telling Gretchen, with the many eyes upon her and the strangers in the room, is suddenly overcome.

"So every year when Christmas came around, the King and the Queen and all the beautiful Princes and Princesses and all the other people came with their gifts to the church and put them on the altar and waited, oh, so sad, because they wanted to hear the lovely bells; but none of them rang—I mean rangled—no, I mean rang."

"Now, way off from the church in a remote village, lived two boys, Pedro and His Little Brother, and they had heard so much of the church that they determined to visit it the day before Christmas and see the people and hear the singing, and so they started out. But just after they had walked all day and got so tired and were getting near the town where the church was, they came across a poor old lady in the snow and Pedro stopped and the Little Brother stopped and they rubbed her hands and her feet and gave her what food they had in their pockets, and finally Pedro sent the Little Brother on alone and said he would wait until some one came along to take the old lady home. He gave Little Brother a piece of money and told him to put it on the altar and Little Brother trudged along and Little Pedro stayed behind with the sick lady."

"Now when Little Brother gets to the church it is all so much more beautiful than he had expected, and so he goes in with the rest and sees all the lovely gifts laid on the altar. And this time the King even puts on his crown, but still the bells don't ring and after a while everybody has waited and waited and still they don't ring, everybody is so disappointed again, but all at once to their astonishment the chimes begin to ring, way, way up in the sky out of sight, for nobody has seen Little Brother crawl up to the altar and put his silver piece on it."

"There is a prolonged oh! of satisfaction from the children. In a far corner of the room the librarian whispers:

"That is a fair sample of what I mean, the children's story telling. You see what an impression that one has made. It brings the lesson of Christmas before them in its very best sense."

"There are many wonderful tales, folklore and myths which have never yet been written for children. There are also many old stories now out of print and not to be obtained, but which have more real merit than much of recent publication. At the story hour on these Saturday mornings the children of the library and the friends they bring are wonderfully interested in these fascinating tales."

"This hour in no sense encroaches upon the school hours, nor does it supplement them except in the unconscious way. It is purely for entertainment."

"One of the mistakes of our age is that we begin by educating our children's intellects rather than their emotions. The result is that many children grow up cold, hard and unsympathetic, with few ideals to meet the realities of life and control them. The education of the heart must keep pace with the education of the head if a well balanced character is to be developed."

"Pedagogy tells us that the science of education is the science of interesting, and a child is ever aroused and interested he can and will educate himself."

"That is the secret of the success of the Child Lore Library; it helps the child to educate himself."



AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

library the books best fitted, year by year, for the child.

The library has already, in its short term of existence, established a literary centre for children and those interested in children's reading. The founders believe that they are at the threshold of a new era of juvenile literature and lay great stress on the fact that in the development of children a very vital part is their literary achievements.

The fashion of the day is the study of children and their needs. The problem of combining in a child's book all those elements which make it interesting to the child and that make it worth while and artistic as literature is agitating the makers of child lore. The library, in sympathy with this movement, is sifting out from the great mass of so called children's books

attachment to books of that nature. Even Kipling's Jungle Books do not seem to please them as much as they do older people. I think children are so disappointed when they find that the animals they see and know about do not act in the way described in these books that they rapidly acquire a distaste for the whole output.

"What they want are the real facts concerning animals, not half fact and half fiction. Animals are so interesting in themselves that these little naturalists don't need anything more than the truth, told simply, interestingly, inspiring them to observation."

Asked the reason for the establishment of the library and about its growth and its popularity, she said:

"The New York mother, distracted by daily cares, domestic, social, charitable,



"ONCE UPON A TIME."

ake as many books as he pleases, one at a time, no time limit being placed.

"In addition, there is a club membership, so that those remote from the library centre may profit equally. To a club of five or more children books are sent. These books are retained for a month and circulated among the members."

"An important feature is the precaution taken against disease. Physicians say that the greater number of children's diseases are contagious, and that herein lies a danger to children in all existing circulating libraries. Even though the members may belong to the very best families, it is realized that the utmost care is necessary. The plan for fumigating the books is under the direction and expert advice of Dr. Fritz Schwyzer, the specialist in such matters. Each book when it returns to the library is fumigated before it is allowed to be taken by another subscriber, so that at all times books taken away are perfectly fresh and clean."

"The benefit of having circulating libraries in the public schools has been demonstrated,

the sowing the seed of the sensational, the drawing me away from the realm of imagination and the delights of the innocent and moral story."

"It was 'Jane Eyre,'" said another mother, "that sailed across my path. I was allowed to read a part, the first scholarly portion. Then, before the love making began the book was taken and hidden. I was not allowed to read further, but my curiosity was aroused. I unearthed the book and read the forbidden chapters. I made up my mind at that time that I never could really love a man who did not have a wife concealed somewhere in the dim recesses of his ancestral home. For years I scorned boys of my own age and even men unless they were dark, mysterious and gruff in manner. That was my early ideal, and it created great havoc in my sentimental days."

"An amusing and rather shocking incident happened the other day," said the librarian, in connection with this precocity of children allowed to browse at will among the grown-up books. A little miss, one of

land at Rockaway Inlet. Bratton said afterward that at the time he couldn't for the world remember whether the tide was coming in or going out. If it was coming in he knew that it would carry them without much effort on their part to within a short distance of Sea Gate Point, but if it was going in the other direction he had great fear that they would be carried past the inlet and out into the ocean."

They a swim slowly along, and after about what seemed to be two hours, from the time they had left Manhattan Beach, where it begins to swing out in a long curve that ultimately rounds the narrow strip

said afterward that that was just about the most ticklish position he had ever been in, for after all the party had gone through this trouble was enough to weaken the strongest nerves."

But all the rest of the party acted well, and not for a minute did they allow themselves to give way to panic. First Bratton towed the disabled swimmer for fifteen minutes or so, and then he was relieved by one of the others.

All this time there had been an utter silence over the water, and they had not even heard a steamboat whistle. They had all in the beginning shouted for help

folded that truth. They are not interested in description. They want action, pure and simple, and adventures; they like natural history and travels and up to 12 they enjoy fairy tales and legendary lore, sometimes after that.

There have come to us recently many simplified versions of the great master-

no use they had stopped. After what seemed to be about two hours more, and when Bratton had begun to give up all hope, as he was sure by that time they must have passed Rockaway Inlet without seeing it, he thought he heard a bell. His hopes began to rise, for it sounded like a bell buoy, and he knew the bell buoys were all inside the harbor.

They all swam in the direction from which the sound seemed to come and the tones of the bell rang out clearer and clearer, until at last they came into sight of a bell buoy, which they reckoned was the one anchored

near Sea Gate Point. After hanging on to this buoy a while for a rest the almost exhausted swimmers started for where they thought the shore ought to be. And, sure enough, in a few minutes they came in sight of the white beach and were soon safely ashore, but half dead from the long mental strain and physical exhaustion.

After recovering sufficiently from their experience they made their way about back to Manhattan Beach, where everybody greeted them as if they had just returned from the grave. They had been five hours and forty minutes in the water.



THE FIRST LOVE STORY.

SWIMMERS LOST IN A FOG.

Perilous Adventure On Coney Island.

David H. Bratton, the well known New York Athletic Club swimmer, who died last week, had many adventures in the water, perhaps the most thrilling of which was the following:

A few years ago he spent the summer at Manhattan Beach. Every day it was his custom to take a long swim straight out into the ocean for a mile or so, and then return at his leisure. He occasionally induced one of the regular bathers to accompany him, until finally quite a little

party went along with him on these trips. They were not so expert in the water as Bratton, but they had such confidence in him that they would have tried to swim to Sandy Hook if he had suggested it.

One day, with six others, he swam out about a mile and a half. Upon turning around to return the party were thrown into a temporary panic by discovering that they had suddenly become enveloped in a fog so dense that they could not see a hundred feet and soon lost all idea of direction.

They swam aimlessly around for several minutes. Bratton did everything he could

to calm their fears and assured them that either the fog would lift quickly or else the tide would carry them within a short distance of shore. The swimmers then mustered up courage and began to swim slowly in the direction that Bratton thought best.

The tide along Coney Island runs in a crescent shape. Rounding Sea Gate Point when it is going out it runs swiftly parallel with the Coney Island shore proper until it reaches a point directly off the foot of the Ocean Boulevard, at the Seaside Park, where it begins to swing out in a long curve that ultimately rounds the narrow strip

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